

Why I Am No Longer Duxbury's Animal Control Officer...

By HALEY-DEE PARLIN

Lately there have been a number of allegations made about me and the job I was doing for the Town of Duxbury as their Animal Control Officer. I have spent the last 3 and 1/2 years working to the best of my ability while suffering chronic pain due to an auto accident in a town vehicle in January of 1999 which left me at times with debilitating pain in my upper back/shoulder area. This injury made it impossible to do any extensive writing or picking up, etc. The shelter had no heat, and inadequate wiring so that the temperature never got above 45° on the floor. The first day I reported to work, I filled out my paperwork and the Town Manager, Rocco Longo, then escorted me to the shelter telling me along the way "I didn't show you this before you agreed to work for us for obvi-

ous reasons." This was in August of 1998. So right from the start I had a tough road ahead of me and the Town Manager as much as admitted that the shelter wasn't good enough to begin with. There were complaints because I enforced the laws of the town. Extreme verbal abuse, e.g. people yelling in my face and nasty tones of voice were the order of the day. There were complaints but I was never allowed to see most of those complaints because my bosses did not feel it was necessary. Complaints go with the job. I knew my job and I did it well. The shelter was messy due to the generosity of people in bringing donations such as rugs & blankets etc. and I did not want to throw things away. We kept hoping for a new shelter so all those things would be put to use. Eventually it got away from me.

I inherited a far below code shelter. You cannot sanitize wood or change air quality with a building that does not come up to code. When I would ask for help I could not get it. I was on call 24/7.

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I am being criticized for the feral cats at the harbor and Ms. Phillips along with Suzi Rines-Toth are alleging that I was sneaky in my dealings. Ms. Phillips released these cats in good faith to Charlie Critch, a town employee, who released them at the town pier when he chose to no longer have them

in his home. Using humane Hav-A-Hart traps I captured them. I used the vets which gave us good prices for services, Ashdod and Plymouth County in Marshfield. I could have used other vets but chose not to because their fees were too high. Standish Humane Society never offered to help us out, we were there on our own. I did not make a habit of catching cats and putting them down. Any cat we caught that was healthy and vetted out with no problems was either fostered or adopted out. All of our animals were spayed and neutered before adoption and we had a 100% adoption record. Ms. Phillips and Ms. Toth want to know about the trapping of cats at the harbor. That order came from my immediate superior who got it from the police chief who got it from the Town Manager who got it from the Board

of Selectmen who got an earful from the citizens whose boats were being trashed by the cats at the harbor. I was doing my job and obeying orders. I did not want to do it and I certainly did not do it on my own.

Duxbury people feel they are entitled to break the laws which they voted on. You have a leash law, obey it. You have wildlife in your town, respect it and if you want your pets to stay alive keep your cats in and your dogs restrained. Would you let your children run loose like that? I loved my job but I resigned due to personal problems namely my health both mentally and physically. I hope this gives you a more accurate idea of the way animal control is done in Duxbury.

Haley Dee Parlin recently resigned as Duxbury's Animal Control Officer.